

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, February 5. 1708.

I Have been telling you the Growth and Encrease of our *East-India* Company's Trade, as to the Flux of Silks, Calicoes, &c. and such other Goods as interfer'd with our own Manufactures; I come now to shew you *at least in a short View*, how far this Trade did really interfere with and prejudice our Manufactures, how far it ruin'd our Poor, or Depopulated our Country.

And *First*, let us examine, how it far'd with our Populous Manufacturing Towns, where before this, our Poor were subsisted, maintain'd, and employ'd by Trade, and particularly by the Weaving of Silks, Stuffs, &c.

To begin with the City of *Canterbury*, where the Manufactures of Silk having been for many Years Planted, and the numbers of Foreigners that settled there very great; the Employment of the Poor upon the Silk

was exceedingly encreased; near a 1000 Looms have been thought, generally speaking, to have been employ'd there, and a proportion'd number of Families must of Consequence have their Bread from that Trade; and how did this City feel the Effect of the Encrease of *East-India* Goods?—Just as the Encrease of one part appear'd, the Decrease of the other Part was as Visible; in the several Years of the growth of the *East-India* Trade, from 1690, to 1700 or thereabouts, this City Languish'd, the number of Masters Decreased; they were either Dead, and none set up in their Rooms, or Broke, and otherwise reduc'd, or left off, nothing being to be gotten by the Trade, till the number of Looms were reduc'd under 50, and not without probability of the Trade being wholly lost to that Place, and if the un-
expected

expected improvement of Planting Hops, had not help'd the Poor to subsist, that City had been in a fair way of being reckon'd among one of the forsaken declining Towns in England, like *Sandwich*, or *Vinebelfea*, which rather live to show the Ruines of good Towns, than to be called Seats of Trade.

From hence let us go to *Norwich*, and *Norfolk*; the City of *Norwich* indeed supported her self under the Loss better than other Places, by its having a great Foreign and Country Trade: But let any Man, who knew that City about 25 Years before, compare its Condition to what it was reduc'd to in the Year 1699, and the visible Decay was not to be conceal'd. The Masters gone to *London*, the Workmen into the Army, and Navy, and in several of the great Towns of *Norfolk*, where they drove formerly a great part of the Trade, the Manufactures seem'd quite lost and forgotten.

But to come nearer home, *Spittle-Fields*, in which the number of *Weavers* and their Dependences are a Prodigy, and will hardly bear a Calculation—What Miseries, what Destruction did this surprising Growth of the *East India* Goods make there? The discontented melancholy People bore their Ruin with the last degree of Patience; the poor Workmen destitute and abandon'd, scatter'd themselves into all manner of Employments, such as Coal-Heaving, Porter-ing, Fruit and Fish-crying; some to the Army, others the Fleet, abundance to mere Begging and Starving, and perhaps not a few to Raking, Thieving, and other evil Courses; in short, all sorts of Misery abounded among them, and it is impossible to describe it.

To look at the Streets; how thin of Inhabitants, the Houses falling down, and without Tenants; the Looms standing still without Workmen, or sold for Bread; the Masters without Journeymen, the Journeymen without Work, and their Families without Bread; that this was the Case of *Spittle-Fields*, I have but too many Witnesses to vouch for; Houses in *Spittle-Fields* would yield no Rent, and in many Places the Rent would not repair them, and in other Places whole Rows might have been purchased for the securing the Growth

Rents, and by my Computation, near 20000 People of all sorts in this one Part were thrown out of their Employment, and scatter'd Abroad to seek Bread.

And let no Man wonder when I talk of the Desolation, this encrease of the *East-India* Goods made in *Spittle-Fields*, or enquire for Reasons to prove what was the Cause of it; since 'tis apparent the Goods brought from *India* interfer'd with, and consequently supplanted almost every thing, whether Woollen or Silk, which that vast Body of People were generally employ'd in.

Then let them consider, that not only the Humour of the Time run against the wearing our own Produce, but the several Goods brought from *India* are made five Parts in six under our Price, and being Imported and Sold at an extravagant Advantage, were yet capable of underselling the cheapest thing we could set about.

Let them then consider, that very near 300000 People are employ'd in the several Parts of *England*, on those very Goods which the Trade in Silks and Calicoes thus interfer'd with; and it will no more appear strange, that so general a Decay upon our Manufactures began to be very sensible to us, and that the Clamours of the Poor began to affect us in more Respects than one.

I confess, it might be a useful piece of Policy to repeal this Act, and restore Trade to its former Decay, in order to a more certain, speedy, and effectual way of bearing the French, viz. to take care the People may be made poor, that they may be the easier persuaded to flee into the Armies, and so the Nations need not be at so great an Expence for recruiting our Forces; this would indeed be a good Experiment, and I believe would effectually do it—And has of a long time been practis'd in *France*.

But as I cannot recommend it to our Government to try, so I think it much better for *England*, that our poor People should be made able to pay towards the maintaining an Army with their Money, than fill it up with their Bodies; that they should send rather than go, and those that do go, should rather go for want of Discretion than want of Bread.

A poor Nation may Fight, but they cannot make War, for if we are once impoverish'd, we may find Armies indeed, but without Money they will make but a Scandalous Figure in the Field.

I proceed no farther in this Melancholy Affair, because I'll leave it for any Man to contradict the Matter of Fact, if he can, and am perswaded I am within Compass in it all.

It remains to show, by some Calculations, of what Consequence this part of

our Trade is, then to prove, that the Encroachment of the *East India* Goods, was the true and only occasion of it, which I shall make past Question, by showing, that the check put to that Encroachment by the Prohibition, has effectually restored our Trade and Towns in all these Particulars to their former Condition, and rather to a better; and thus, I hope, I shall convince all Mankind of the Benefit, and absolute Necessity of the Prohibition.

ADVERTISEMENT to the Author of the WEEKLY COMEDY.

THIS Author having not only offer'd a Riddle to the World, but an extraordinary Prize to the Solution, to be paid in Books, some of which being very Valuable for their Antiquity, and the Author of this, professing his Library Deficient in those Treats, which it seems the Comedian is well stock'd with; particularly the Famous *THOMAS THUMB*, in Folio with Annotations, with *Jack and the Gynn*, the *King* and the *Collier*; but above all, the Renown'd *BILLY of BILLERICAY*, Books, few but our Learned Comedian know the Value of — Now to show our re-

spect for the Author, and that we understand how to Value the Books he offers, we have produc'd an Essay upon his Riddle, confessing, that no body else attempting it, 'tis a sign the World, unhappy Ignorance! has but a mean Opinion of the Prize: Since not a School Boy of 10 Years old could have missed it.

I ask his Pardon for Re-printing his Riddle, because perhaps the World are not all so happy as to see his Paper, and some that do see it, are not so wise as to think it worth Reading.

OF Flesh and Blood I was born and bred,
So Liv'd till Cruell Fate cut off my Head:
And now, alas! it is my hard mishap
Of Flesh and Blood to have no Form or Shape;
But yet more Beautiful I look and Gay
Than when I sported in my Native Clay:
By Death I gain'd a happy Liberty,
And by my Bondage now I'm made more free:
Like Proteus I am found in ev'ry Shape,
To Please each Man of Sense and ev'ry Ape:
I run, yet have no Legs to stand or go,
And often Fly whether I will or no.
I'm reckon'd Handsom without Head or Eyes,
Yet in my Net I oft inclose the Wise,

*With ev'ry Colour my Complection stands,
 And I wear Finger Rings, but have no Hands :
 I'm said to be the Ladies Favourite,
 Because I was not born or bred to Wit,
 My Business being made to cover it.
 Early as Man I first was made by Heaven ;
 But since Displeas'd with that poor Form then giv'n,
 I sought a New Creator that wou'd be
 Coxcomb and Fool enough to Humour me ;
 Till I had made Mankind at length admire
 To see A Burnt Child should not dread the Fire.*

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THE SOLUTION.

THE Hair that in our Wigs does shine
 by this Enigma's meant,
 But pray, Sir, let us have a Line,
 who 'twas the Riddle sent.
 I also now Demand the Prize
 That's to the Solver Due,
 And do expect you'll Advertise,
 against the next REVIEW.

I am oblig'd to do Justice also, by telling him, that this Solution is due to the Ingenuity of a kind Stranger, who sent it me in Compassion, supposing I had not Leisure to study so hard, as I must have done, for the Explanation.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THAT *MARY KIRLEUS*, the Widow of *JOHN KIRLEUS*, Son of Dr. *THO. KIRLEUS*, a Sworn-Physician, in ordinary to King *Charles II.* Sells (rightly prepar'd) his Famous Drink and Pills; experienc'd above 50 Years to cure all Ulcers, Sores, Scabs, Itch, Scurf, Scurvies, Leprosies, Running of the Reins, and the most inveterate VENEREAL Disease, with all its attending Symptoms, without Fluxing, Confinement, or destructive Mercurial Preparations: These incomparable Medicines need no Words to express

their Virtues; the many miserable One that have been happily cured, after gives over by others, sufficiently recommend them as the most Sovereign Remedy in the World against all such Malignities: She cures many after Fluxing, and in Compassion to the distressed, will deal according to the Patient's Ability. The Drink is 3 s. the Quart, the Pill 1 s. the Box with Directions, and Advice *Gratis*.

††† She lives at the Golden-Ball in Hand Court, over against great Turnstile in Holborn.